

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 2 and 6 will have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter. Additionally, the specification will have been amended to eliminate several informalities while a replacement sheet containing figure 22 will have been submitted for entry.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the outstanding objections set forth in the above mentioned official action.

Initially, Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for acknowledging their claim of foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and for confirming that the certified copy of the Japanese foreign priority application, upon which the claim for priority is based, has been received in the parent application.

Applicants also wish to respectfully thank the Examiner for considering the information contained in the Information Disclosure Statements filed in the present application on August 9, 2004 and August 7, 2006, by the return of the signed and initialed PTO 1449 forms attached to each of the above noted Information Disclosure Statements.

In the Outstanding Official Action, the Examiner withdrew claims 2 and 6 from consideration pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.142 (b). The Examiner discussed Applicants traverse of the restriction requirement, considered the same unpersuasive and made the requirement final.

Since, by the present response, Applicants have canceled claims 2 and 6, and intend to file a divisional application drawn to these claims, Applicants respectfully submit that the election of species requirement and the traverse thereof is no longer a relevant issue.

The Examiner additionally objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84 (P) (5) for not including reference characters discussed in the specification.

By the present response, Applicants have submitted a replacement sheet of drawings containing figure 22 in which the missing reference characters have been inserted, as appropriate. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings.

In the Outstanding Official Action, the Examiner objected to the specification because of an enumerated number of language informalities. By the present response, Applicants have amended the specification to eliminate the noted informalities. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

In the Outstanding Official Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 1, 3-5, and 7-12 are allowed. Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for his of indication of Allowability.

Applicants further note the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance and in this regard, while Applicants do not disagree with the features enumerated in the Examiner's Statement of Reasons, Applicants further wish to point out that each of the claims in the present application recites a particular combination of features. Thus the patentability of each claim is thus also based on the particular combination of features recited therein. Accordingly, the reasons for allowance should not be limited to those features enumerated or mentioned by the Examiner.

Since Applicants have overcome and/or eliminated the Examiner's basis for the objection to the specification and drawings and because Applicants have canceled claims 2 and 6, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now both in condition for

allowance as well is in proper form for allowance. An action to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION


Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so. Applicants have amended the specification and drawings to eliminate any basis for objection thereto. Applicants have additionally canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, the claims that the Examiner indicated as directed to a non-elected species. Applicants have further submitted comments on the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance.

Accordingly, Applicants have provided clear evidentiary bases supporting the patentability of all the claims in the present application and respectfully request an indication to such effect, in due course.

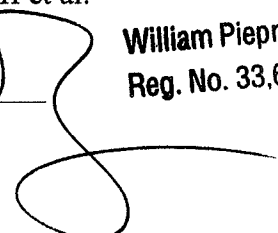
Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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